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SUBJECT: BULGARIA'S VIEW ON KOSOVO STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

REF: STATE 135734

Classified By: Acting DCM Brad Freden, for reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

11. (C) We delivered reftel demarche to Deputy FM Lyubomir Kyuchukov on 21 August. He confirmed Bulgaria's supportive approach to U.S. policy on Kosovo, while voicing Bulgaria's concern that the effect of a final settlement on regional security be given due consideration by all parties. In an August 28 follow-up meeting with Iva Kruleva, Chief Expert in the MFA's Southeast Europe Directorate, she restated Bulgaria's constructive approach. Looking toward the September 11-12 meeting of the Kosovo Contact Group, which will be held in Sofia, Kruleva agreed on the need for Bulgarian officials to refrain from making public statements that might distract from the Contact Group's message.

12. (C) COMMENT: The Bulgarian government is focused on EU accession on January 1, 2007, and hosting the Contact Group will allow the GOB to showcase its role as a "team player" and a stabilizing force in the region. Privately, though, the GOB is concerned about the shape an independent Kosovo will take -- hence, the GOB's insistence on including "regional stability" as a key agenda item for the "Contact Group Plus" meeting between Contact Group members and countries from the region. END COMMENT.

KARAGIANNIS